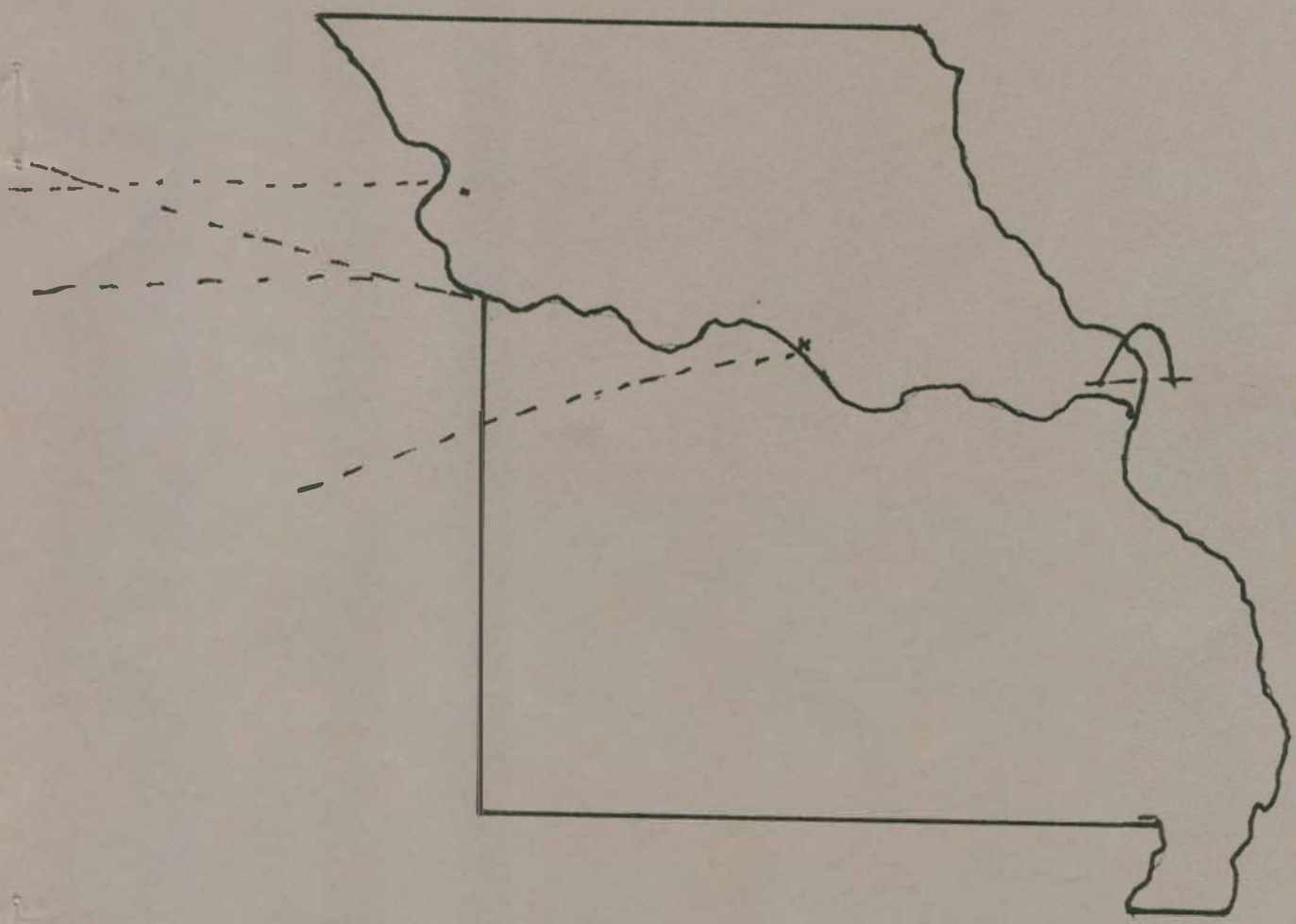
TOWARD THE SETTING SUN



The Historical Journal
of
The United Methodist Church
The Missouri Area

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Volume I, No. 2 May, 1983

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NOTES ON THE AUTHORS

Mary K. Longstreth is a retired diaconal minister in the Missouri East Conference. She is the widow of the late W.K. Longstreth, and spent many years helping him pioneer camping in the Missouri Conference. Mary is a member of the Missouri East Conference Commission on Archives and History, and served as its chair for several quadrennia.

Samaritan United Methodist Church is located in St. Louis. This history was taken from an anniversary document of the congregation.

John O. Gooch is pastor at Green Trails church in Chesterfield, Mo., and Editor of the Journal.

EDITOR'S NOTES

This is our second edition of the JOURNAL, and the one we hope will inspire all of you to become a part of its life. We are distributing this issue to all members of both annual conferences, hoping you will do two things. First, we hope you will become a subscriber, and encourage others to subscribe as well. Forms for that purpose are bound in the JOURNAL. Second, we hope this will get you excited about Methodist history in your community. Excited enough to begin to put in on paper. If you aren't sure how to go about that, drop me a note and we'll talk about it. We need your contributions of historical material if the JOURNAL is to continue.

In the fall, we will publish our first 'official' Bicentennial issue, with information about the bicentennial celebration in Missouri, as well as articles about local churches. I hope you all are subscribers by that time, and exc ited about the celebration of who we are as United Methodists.

John

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Missouri Methodist Historical Society

(UNITED METHODIST CHURCH)

☐ Individual	$5.00	☐ Patron	$25.00
☐ Family	$10.00	☐ Life	$50.00
☐ Retired	$3.00	☐ Retired Life	$25.00

☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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CAMP JO-OTA: A HISTORY

Mary K. Longstreth

"Would you consider giving this tract of land to our Missouri Conference for a youth camp?" The questions was directed to Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrow, owners of extensive farm land a few miles north of Clarence, Missouri. They and the Rev. and Mrs. Floyd Rigg were enjoying a leisurely stroll in their woods on a Sunday afternoon in the late 1940's. The sudden question from their pastor was unexpected.

Mrs. Barrow had for years been a leader in youth work in the Clarence Methodist Church as well as in the Kirksville District. She became District Secretary for Youth Work in the Woman's Society of Christian Service and later was the Conference Secretary, where she gave outstanding leadership for eight years. She attended Training Schools for leaders of youth held at Central Methodist College, National College in Kansas City, Mt. Sequoyah, and took correspondence courses from Nashville. All of this was a veritable spiritual pilgrimage which led her to the deep conviction that the church's outdoor youth camps throughout Methodism had great impact on the religious development of young people and their life work decisions.

One Sunday evening she felt distress because she knew there was no Methodist Camp in the Missouri Conference and she had fourteen M.Y.F.ers eager to attend. She inquired, "Why don't

we have more camps?" Her pastor replied, "beccause people like the Barrows, who have land, keep it instead of giving it to God."

The Missouri Conference of the Methodist Church had come into being through the uniting of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church in 1939. It included that part of the state north of the Missouri River except for four counties clustered around St. Louis and one church close to the northern boundary of Kansas City. There was no Methodist camp in this area "inherited from the past"....those were in the southern part of the state.

Floyd Rigg was one of those ministers in the conference who was interested in strong and vigorous youth camping. He was aware that the Conference Director of Intermediate Youth Work, Rev. Wilbur E. Longstreth, pastor at Memphis, had been holding camps in the eastern part of the conference at any available site. For some years one was held annually at Camp Oko-Tipi, a Boy Scout camp near Saverton on the Mississippi River. Another was at the state park at Keosauqua, Iowa, just across the border. Rev. Newton Barrett, Executive Secretary of the Board of Education, started some camping in 1940-41 at a Boy Scout camp north of St. Joseph, and later at Camp Hillyard, a Y.M.C.A. camp. This was carried forward in succeeding years by Rev. Vernon J. Wheeler. He writes, "my best camping resource that year was an Eagle Scout, Ed Boulton, then a teenager, and currently the United Methodist Bishop of the Dakotas."

Rev. Jesse Layton, pastor at Brunswick, and Dr. Joseph W. Thompson, pastor at Carrollton, chose the park on the Grand River near Brunswick in 1941 for another camp experience. They enlisted the help of Mr. Longstreth. Dr. Thompson writes of this venture, "I worked with Jesse in organizing the camp. My daughter Mary Margaret attended. And of course Wilbur joined in, making it a success in a most unlikely location!" In 1946, Dr. Thompson became Executive Secretary of the Conference Board of Education and worked to expand and strengthen youth work. He developed camping for Intermediates at Camp Crowder and Willow Row.

In these various camping experiences---and there may have been others for which we found no record---accomodations were often primitive and complications were many. But these adult leaders---both ministers and lay people---had dedication, determination, and ingenuity. They were not easily deterred, even though the years in the 1940's included the period of the Second World War with all the restrictions, rationing, and restlessness which came with it. Greatly worn and patched tires often had to carry people and supplies to a camp and then the question was "will we make it home again?" Certain foodstuffs were in scarce supply, which complicated planning and cooking the meals. Restrictions on how many could attend meetings and how far they could travel to them also had to be taken into account.

In spite of all these things, the Lord's work went forward in these camping efforts. The spirits of the youth groups, their leaders and staff members ran high. Youth camping in the

relatively 'new' Missouri Conference was off to a good start, at least in the minds and hearts of the participants!

A good start? Yes! But so far, camping of several days only could take place when the camps or sites belonging to other organizations were available. A camp belonging to the Conference was the great need! So it was that the Barrows' answer to their pastor's question on the Sunday afternoon stroll was going to affect thousands of persons, born and unborn, in the years to follow. When they did answer, it was "we would be happy to give the 70 acres."

Floyd Rigg at once got in touch with Rev. J.O. Craig, President, and Dr. Thompson, Executive Secretary, of the Board of Education. They drove to Clarence to join him in visiting the site, which includes rough, wooded, land. They recognized that it would be very good for a camp and decided to recommend that the Conference accept the gift.

Later, at the Annual Conference session, reluctance was encountered for at least two reasons. First, no funds were available for development and operation. Second, not everyone was convinced that a Conference Camp was needed. "It would take yers before it could be used" was the attitude of many. But this writer well remembers Dr. Thompson stride down in aisle insisting as he went that camping could begin there the following summer. He knew that, stowed away in their parsonage garage, the Longstreths had the used tents, the second-hand army cots and the motley array of pots, pans, dishes, and table ware which they had assembled and sued in the six or seven

years of 'make-do' camping experience. Such as it was, this equipment was available and usable. In the final vote, the gift of 70 acres to the Board of Education and the Missouri Annual Conference was accepted gratefully and an important new venture was begun.

The ministers and lay people with special interest in youth were filled with high hope. It was agreed that the following summer, 1953, camp should be held there. As Intermediate Director, Wilbur Longstreth felt the need for getting acquainted with the land. He and Rev. Dayton Grover, Sr. the pastor to Rutledge, and a few Boy Scouts from the Memphis Church, including Dale Kutzner and John Longstreth, spent three days there. They cleared enough underbrush to pitch their tents around a camp fire and then proceeded to hike over the land. A good site was spotted where an encampment for 30 to 40 persons could be placed. In the meantime, they were 'dreaming dreams and seeing visions' of the future. They were glad to have a time with Mr. and Mrs. Barrow, getting to know them and learning things of importance about the land. They also became acquainted with the business section of Clarence.

As time went on, more and more people across the conference became eager to know more. "What's going to be the name of our new camp?" was a matter of interest to youth and adults alike. Suggestions were welcomed and there some responses. One was "North Missouri Methodist Camp", another was Camp Clarmo (for Clarence, Mo.). When the decision was announced by the Conference Board of Education, it was "Camp Jo-Ota" that won, "Jo being for Johanna Rigg (Mrs. Floyd Rigg) and "Ota" for Ota

(Mrs. W.W.) Barrow.

Dr. Thompson remembers that Dr. Bradford Powell asked "where did the name come from?" Many people were interested in knowing and gladly accepted it as being unique and appropriate upon hearing the explanation. At the dedication of the camp Dr. Monk Bryan, who was then the pastor of Missouri Methodist Church in Columbia (but is now Bishop of the Nebraska Area) said, "This camp has been given an Indian name for two squaws, Mrs. Rigg and Mrs. Barrow and they are on the platform with us today".

When the time for the first camping session arrived in 1953 the atmosphere was one of excitement and expectancy, along with some uncertainty! History was in the making! Wilbur Longstreth as diirecor and J. Vernon Wheeler as dean had an excellent staff of clergy and lay helpers including Rev. and Mrs. Dayton Grover and Rev. E. I. Webber. All accomodations were primitive but everyone took it iin stride. The girls' tents and the boys' tents were in opposite directions from the headquarters area. Some of the tents had been used at the Scotland County Fairgrounds before the buildings there were erected. The largest served well for cooking and dining with capable Martha Grover in charge and Mary Longstreth as helper. Sometimes raw vegetables and canned goods arrived as gifts from nearby Methodists. Water was brought several times a day from Clarence in large cream cans. This big tent was also used for classes, worship services and recreation when weather prevented these activities "in the open". The soda pop stand was a large

cooler (using chunks of ice) in a triangular space enclosed by a strip of canvas stretched around three trees. It was 'open for business' only at certain times each day and was administered by a few campers who delighted in doing the job! An old-fashioned farm dinner bell mounted on top of a tall post kept the daily program on schedule. Ringing it was a popular assignment. Signs posted here and there with arrows were far from professional but provided necessary and trustworthy information.

With no running water in camp and with soaring temperatures, it was imperative that opportunity be provided for swimming. The nearest facility was the public pool in Macon, about twenty miles distant. Getting the campers to and from there daily was a long and drawn out operation in private cars to the Director bought personally a 'third hand' school bus which worked amazingly well. This was a great ehlp. Swimming was a joyous and popular part of camp life! The campers were cleaner also!!

The day's activities were varied. There was a specified place called the "Chapel in the Woods" with a worship center for private meditation and prayer. Morning Watch devotions and evening prayer circles were times of spiritual growth and inspiration. The final activity at week's close was a large prayer circle where personal dedications were made. In the years after the lake had been filled, the group would meet the last night on the west bank and, looking across the water, would see the large, rough cross erected on the opposite bank. It was illuminated by a blazing fire in front of it and was reflected in the water of the lake.

Classes during the week included Bible, Missionary Work of the Church, Hymnology, Methodist Youth Fellowship plans and methods and various outdoor crafts. The Conservation Education Director, Basil Morland, came and gave Nature Talks as well as pointing out various kinds of wild life during hikes. Fun time included a variety of games, sports, and a wide collection of camping songs. New friends and shared experiences became the basis for many a happy memory recalled decades later!

As Executive Secretary of the Conference Board of Education, Dr. Thompson attended a ten-day class in "Church Camping and Church Sites" at Mt. Sequoyah. Elizabeth Brown from the General Board of Education in Nashville was the teacher. She strongly urged that the development of a new site for church camping be undertaken only after a qualified church architect had drawn plans based on the needs and the situation. Accordingly, the Missouri Conference Board employed Bradford G. Sears, landscape architect in Nashville, Tenn., to produce a design for Camp Jo-Ota. He produced these only after becoming familiar with the land and the needs for buildings. His plans were accepted.

Now came the need for funds for development! The suggestion was made that the Annual Conference institute a "Camp Dollar Day" whereby every congregation be asked to take an annual voluntary offering of $1.00 per member on a given Sunday. The idea was well received and plans were set up. The local churches liked the idea and cooperated. This became an effective means for spreading interest in the camp as well as gaining financial support for it. Its use has been continued

across the years.

The second season for camping lasted several weeks. Kirksville District used it twice for intermediates, but other groups, both in and out of the district, began to recognize the possibilities there. Visible signs were evident which gave encouragement to the idea that the camp was going to be "something great"! The dam was being built so that the natural ravine would become a lake. Mary Zenola Longstreth speaks of the great fun a group had playing hockey on the dry lake floor. One wondered "do you suppose we'll come back some day when it's a lake and tell how we played at the bottom of it?" Finally, of course, the day came when it was ready and then came the sunning and swimming, the plunging and playing. Mr. Longstreth was an American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor and set up the water activities accordingly. Beginners could learn to swim and others worked for advancement.

The report of the Board of Education to the 1953 Missouri Annual Conference indicated other significant improvements: "We express appreciation to Wilbur Longstreth, not only for the use of his equipment but for the tremendous expenditure of energy in serving as Director of the Camp. Using temporary equipment, this camp was used by 230 people this season. Permanent improvements are underway. A deep well has been drilled and delivers an abundance of pure water, the road has been surfaced, electricity brought in, and the lake site is being cleared. our churches were generous in their response to our "Dollars for Youth" program, giving approximately $4300."

Mr. and Mrs. Barrow continued their deep interest in everything that took place at the camp. They spared nothing of time, service, or things to help as needed. Their presence and their suggestions were invaluable. For example, application had been made to the Missouri Conservation Commission for fish to stock the lake. When the day came for deliivery, Mr. and Mrs. Barrow met the fish depository truck at Monroe City and transported the fish in five gallon cans to the lake. They thrived in their new environment which thrilled the fishermen and would-be fishermen among the campers in years following.

The first building, erected in 1954, was the large one containing the dining hall (106 ft. by 36 ft.) and the Chapel. Vernon Wheeler writes "The next year we had the floors, walls, and roof of the first building in place. It was the first time I had seen ship-lap lumber applied so that it required a close look to distinguish it from expensive weather-boarding." Such expertise of Bill Barrow contributed much to getting started at Camp Jo-Ota. We began camp with a dreadful problem of house flies, so while Wilbur drove the youth to Macon for swimming, I stayed and tacked screen wire over the window-openings. I worked alone with Martha, the only other person in camp, who was bearing the big load of preparing meals for a full camp of about 60 people. She was a real heroine, sometimes being reduced to cooking on the one burner of Wilbur's heavy duty gasoline stove. The other stove was sometimes unworkable.

It was in the fall of 1954 and the spring of 1955 that I campaigned among the women of Kirksville District for money to

buy a large 'restaurant size' gas stove for cooking at Jo-Ota. I figured we owed that much to Martha Grover. After our daughter Norma Ruth had experienced Intermediate Camp there in 1953, 1954, and 1955, she loved the place so much that she worked as cook's helper in 1956, 1957, and 1958, serving the entire summer each year. In 1956 she served also as song leader in the Kirksville District camps.

From the minutes of the Jo-Ota Board of Trustees meeting held March 4, 1954, we read: "Mr. Barrow reported that $3,000 worth of insurance on the Dining Hall and Kitchen had been secured from the Macon Mutual Insurance Co." Another action elected Mr. Longstreth to be Superintendent of the camp for 1954 and gave permission for the papers of the Incorporation to be kept in a safety deposit box in Memphis, Missouri, there being no deposit box available in Clarence.

In the construction of this first building, Mr. Barrow and this three farm hands were joined by volunteers from several churches in the eastern half of the conference, from Memphis on the north to Columbia on the south. Greg Roberts and his brother Richard recently recalled going several times with the Memphis group to help. DeWilton Robinson of Wilkes Blvd., Columbia, enjoys telling of having taken part in work days. Others reading these line will recall, perhaps, that they and their friends had a part in the project---would that we had their names and memories of it. Dale Kutzner recalled helping build the log and rope bridge needed on the trail leading from the dining room over a small ditch to the boys' tent area.

This commodious building that became the all important headquarters was appropriately named "Barrow Hall".

In the years before there was a re sident caretaker, volunteers were needed to watch things. Mr. and Mrs. Barrow made many trips for this purpose. Dr. Thompson writes, "John Longstreth, a teen-ager, spent many weeks at the camp and stayed alone on weekends to guard valuables". There seem to be no records or memories of any persons prowling around to harm the property or to carry equipment away.

The exciting period of more rapid development had begun. Soon gifts were given for Barrow Hall. Some of the earliest included a deep freeze given by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Agnew of Paris, tables by the Mexico W.S.C.S., and fine copy of Sallman's "Head of Christ" honoring Mrs. Thurman Stallings given by the Mexico Wesleyan Service Guild. Many other gifts have been made across the years, some recorded, many unrecorded, alas!

The Bath House, with separate facilities for boys and girls, hot water heater, and modern toilets was given by Missouri Methodist Church W.S.C.S. of Columbia. Mrs. Dale Summers and others worked very hard for this greatly needed facility.

The girls' camping area was established by the gifts of these cabins: the Gertrude Feeley Lodge, Ayers cabin, Cook-Zenge cabin. The boys' area consisted of Rigg Lodge, Salisbury cabin, and Hannibal cabin.

During the Annual Conference session held at Brookfield in the fall of 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Barrow had formally presented the deed for the 70 acres to Bishop Ivan Lee Holt. Since that

time a great deal of development and building had taken place. It was time for dedicating the camp! Accordingly, plans were laid and on Sunday afternoon, September 20, 1959, approximately three hundred people gathered at the camp. Bishop Eugene M. Frank conducted the Act of Dedication and Consecration as well as giving the address for the day. The dreams of the young and the visions of the more mature among those who had pioneered in camping in the 1940's were being gloriously fulfilled! "We're on the upward trail", which had been a favorite camp song, took on deeper meanings of gratitude to God for his leading and blessing.

Rev. Earl C. Griffith, chairman of the Camp Jo-Ota Board of Trustees, presided. Dr. Monk Bryan, president of the Conference Board of Education, introduced the guests. Donors of buildings or those representing them were introduced by A. Loy Jones as follows:

Ayers Cabin	M/M William H. Ayers	M/M Ayers
Cook-Zenge cabin	M/M Rex Cook and Miss Dorothy Zenge	M/M Cook & Miss Zenge
Salisbury cabin	Salisbury UM Church	Rev. W.K. Harper
Hannibal cabin	Hannibal District	Rev. Joseph Wagner
Bath House	Missouri UM Church W.S.C.S., Columbia	Mrs. M.C. Sweeney President
Gertrude Feeley Lodge	Gertrude Feeley Zone Hannibal Dist. WSCS	Mrs. Clifford Taylor, President
Rigg Lodge	In honor of Rev. and Mrs. Floyd Rigg	Rev. J. Frederick Lawson
Barrow Hall	"Dollars For Youth"	Mrs. W.W. Barrow
Huff House	In memory of Rev. Arthur L. Huff	Mrs. Arthur L. Huff

The lake and all other facilities	many,many, persons	Rev. Donald Reid

The singing of the Doxology was a fitting climax to the presentations. Rev. Floyd Rigg read appropriate Scripture portions and Rev. J.O. Craig gave the benediction. The Clarence High School band played under the direction of Mr. Bradley Moore.

Members of the Camp Board of Trustees at that time were: Earl C. Griffith, Chairman; W.W. Barrow, Vice-Chairman; A. Loy Jones, Secretary; Edward F. Bruns, Treasurer; Glen T. Beaty, Donald F. Reid, J. Frederick Lawson, Joseph H. Wagner, Bishop Eugene M. Frank. Former members of the Board included J. O. Craig, Wilbur E. Longstreth, Floyd Rigg, and the late D.J. Van Devander.

In 1958, Mrs. Fay Tils was employed as caretaker of the camp and continues her faithful service there to this day. Her husband, who is a carpenter, built a goodly number of the buildings at the camp after that date. These include the caretaker's home, and the Agnew Shelter House. Also included are: Kirksville Cabin, given by the Kirksville District; Betty Davis Memorial Cabin, given in memory of Betty Davis, wife of Rev. Roger Davis; Runge Memorial Cabin, given in memory of Rev. Andrew Runge; David Vancil Memorial Chapel, given by Rev. and Mrs. Allen Vancil in memory of their son; Tomlin Cabin, given in memory of Rev. Ray Tomlin; Poston Cabin, given by the Poston family.

The swimming pool was built in 1966. It was designed by Les Black, excavated by James Van Houten and the plumbing was done

by Allen Watson. Cement was poured by Marsh Brothers of Macon and Heidinger and Hill of Monroe City.

It is not the purpose of this article to complete the records of the camp nor tell the full story to date. That fascinating job remains for some historian of the future. From decade to decade great changes have come and will continue. New opportunities have opened, new challenges have appeared, new needs have arisen. New young people, new leaders, new ministries have continued without interruption. But new Conference boundaries, new social conditions, new concepts and new problems have not deterred the "good people called Methodists" from continuing, supporting, and enlarging the work of God in and through the camp.

Jo-Ota is now one of three camps under the administration and general supervision of the Missouri East Conference Council on Camps and Conferences. Other denominations in the area, without camps of their own, have been glad to join in ecumenical gatherings held there. Within the past six months plans have been announced for a new building which will accomodate local church groups having spring or autumn retreats or meetings. In the summer it will serve as the base of operations for the camp directors of larger events. The plans sound great. The needs exist. We know not "what the future hath of marvel or surprise" but we glory in the determination to carry forward God's work at Camp Jo-Ota. May it be so! Amen!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel greatly indebted to Dr. Joseph Thompson of Kirksville for the research he has done and the information he has furnished for this article. He believes, as I do, that the early history of Camp Jo-Ota needed to be written and preserved. It has a unique significance. He and others have encouraged me. I am grateful for this and for the slides which he has carefully preserved through the years.

I am also indebted to Mrs. W.W. Barrow, Clarence, who talked with me some years ago about the need for a written history. She has made available the material which she wrote from her rich store of memories. Without her dedication, vision, and influence the camp might not have existed!

Others who have shared in providing material and who have my gratitude:

Mrs. Floyd Rigg, whose clippings from the HANNIBAL COURIER POST were most helppful.

Rev. J. Vernon Wheeler, St. Joseph, whose extensive and careful research proved to be very helpful. His memories as dean, teacher, and helper in the early years are rich!

Mrs. Fay Tils, Clarence, whose faithful service as caretaker has been recognized by the annual conference.

Dale Kutzner, Storm Lake,Iowa, who shared his memories of working and camping at Jo-Ota as a teenager.

John Longstreth, Portland, Michigan, and Mary Z. Longstreth, Memphis, Tenn., loyal campers who have some unique things to

tell about the whole undertaking from the point of view of the "Longstreth children".

Minutes of the Missouri Annual Conference, 1940---1961.

Minutes of the Camp Jo-Ota Board of Trustees, Ma y 4, 1954.

HISTORY OF SAMARITAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

(taken from an anniversary history of the church)

Social tensions and conflicts experienced by Blacks in East St. Louis, Illinois, during the second decade of the twentieth century gave birth to a new Methodist congregation in St. Louis, Missouri. Wesley Tablernacle Methodist Church, East St. Louis, was a vital, growing Black congregation under the pastoral leadership of the Reverend Martin Luther Jackson. A nucleus of the members of the Wesley Church, seeking new economic and educational opportunities, crossed the river to become residents of St. Louis, Missouri. The Reverend Jackson accompanied this group, providing the force which held them together leading to the organization of a new congregation. In June, 1917, this group of worshippers found a temporary location on Chouteau Avenue. This temporary location was made possible through the efforts of Dr. B. F. Abbott, pastor of Union Memorial Methodist Church; District Superintendent W.R. Rivere; and the Bishop of the Area, William A. Quayle.

In August, 1917, a site in the 4100 block of West Belle Place was selected as a more permanent place of worship. The name, accepted by the group, was "The Good Samaritan Methodist Episcopal Church". This name was symbolic of the protective benediction perceived by the group and expressive of the joy of finding "peace and shelter" in a new urban environment.

In October of 1917, a Black congregation on Papin Street (St. James Methodist Church) lost the building in which it

worshipped. Under the guidance of Superintendent Rivere, the St. James congregation joined the Good Samaritan congregation and the two became one. This merged group functioned smoothly with the co-leadership of Reverend Jackson and the Reverend R. G. Williams, who had been the pastor of St. James Church.

In the spring of 1918, the Reverend W.H. Wheeler, noted as a great preacher, became the pastor of Good Samaritan Methodist Episcopal Church.

Those persons recalled as founding/charter members of Good Samaritan Church are: Cora Brown, Lovey Pinkney, Mary Jefferson, Mary Jackson Hendricks, Nancy Jobe, Mary White, Norvella Glaspie, James Gregory, Robert Palmer, William McCullen, Dixie Hall French, Carrie Smith, Leona Jackson West, Edna Jackson Simmons, Lydia Woolridge, Mary Palmer, Carrie Cade, Mrs. J.W.T. Smith.

Following the pastorate of Reverend Wheeler was the Reverend A.L. Reynolds. During his tenure the first unit of what was proposed to become a major edifice was constructed as 4168 West Belle Place. The community was a thriving one and the congregation and church school grew. From that membership came several Methodist ministers---many of whom have distinguised themselves as preachers and theologians. Among them: Dr. Charles C. Copher, F.A. Blackwell, W.H. Brewer, R.M. Dale, Joseph D. Edwards, Sr., Alphonse Maxwell, Henry C. Moore, Robert C. Moore, A.L. Reynolds, Jr., C.C. Reynolds, J.E. Tunstall, R.W. Ward.

In 1948 came the opportunity to purchase the edifice at 4234

Washington Avenue. With the dynamic leadership of Reverend J. Walt Moore, the congregation purchased the property, and the name of the church became Samaritan Methodist Episcopal Church.

The records of this congregation reveal significant periods of joy and trauma. In 1927 the building at 4168 West Belle suffered tornado damage; in 1957 a tornade damaged extensively the building at 4234 Washington. In 1962 a fire completely gutted the building, causing a loss of over $200,000. The congregation voted to 'rebuild' on the site; and, during the two years of rebuilding, we discovered again the reality of love as church groups and others invited us to worship in their facilities. We note that Samaritan utilized the facilities of Temple Israel, Evangelical and Reformed Church at Shreve and Margaretta, the Baptist Building, Grand and Martin Luther King Drive. The office staff operated from the facilities of the area Bishop, Matthew W.Clair, Jr.

On Easter Sunday, March 20, 1964, the Samaritan congregation marched triumphantly into its rebuilt edifice---with the minister, H.M. White, District Superintendent G.W. Hubbard, and Bishop Matthew W. Clair, Jr. The congregation had again demonstrated its ability to deal constructively with crisis and, within a record period, the building debt was retired. The mortgage was burned in 1972.

The years following 1964 have witnessed changes in the community and subsequent changes in the congregation. No longer is Samaritan community based; its members are dispersed throughout the metropolitan area. However, some efforts have been made to maintain contact with residents and members. Such

efforts have included:

Headstart Center, in cooperation with H.D.C.

Summer Youth Ministry,

Crisis center for food and clothing.

There is pride in our heritage. There is deep gratitude for those whose efforts and commitment in the past have made possible the present. There is, however, the challenge ever before us to "press on toward the mark for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus".

PIONEER CIRCUITS IN MISSOURI

John O. Gooch

United Methodist work in Missouri began in the summer of 1798, when John Clark preached at Bates' Rock, (present-day Herculaneum), near the mouth of Joachim Creek. Nothing permanent came from this work, though later Clark organized class meetings along Coldwater Creek in St. Louis County. These, too, were impermanent. (1)

In 1805, Joseph Oglesby was appointed by Bishop Asbury to seek out prospects for Methodist work in Missouri. He crossed over to St. Charles, and them up the Missouri River as far as the Femme Osage River (which, if it is the same as the Osage, empties into the Missouri just east of present-day Jefferson City). He reports "I preached at a number of places, had a good congregation at Mr. Calliway's..." (2) This was Flanders Callaway, the son-in-law of Daniel Boone, to whom Oglesby also talked. Then he crossed the state to the Murphy Settlement (Farmington) and preached in the ome of Sarah Barton Murphy, the founder. He reported to the Western Conference of 1806 there were 200 likely prospects for Methodist work in Missouri. This may have equalled the entire American population in the territory at the time! (3)

In 1806, John Travis was appointed to "Missourie" and

directed to form a circuit. During that year, he organized two, the Missouri, which stretched along both sides of that river, and the "Merrimack" which was the territory south of that river. The Missouri Circuit had 56 members, and the Meramec 50 (4). These were the pioneer circuits in Missouri, with open boundaries except where they touched each other.

Coldwater Circuit was formed in 1808, occupying the territory between the Missouri and Meramec Rivers. This included St. Louis and St. Louis County, though no work was begun in the city itself. It was named for Coldwater Creek, along which Clark's classes had been organized at the turn of the century. The Meramec circuit reached as far south as Cape Girardeau.

In 1809, Cape Girardeau became a separate circuit, and New Madrid was added in 1812. Cape Girardeau circuit included McKendree Chapel, which is the oldest Methodist church building west of the Mississippi, and an official United Methodist shrine. New Madrid was organized as a result of a journey from Cape Girardeau across the Great Swamp by Jesse Walker and John Scripps. Dr. Tucker calls it the oldest Methodist organization in the state with an unbroken existence. (5)

In 1814, the Saline circuit was carved out in St. Francois County along the Saline River. Merrimac's name was changed to Bellevue in 1815, and that same year the Booneslick circuit (Howard County) was formed from a part of the Missouri circuit. Named for the famous salt lick worked by the Boones, it covered most of central Missouri if its boundaries were the same as

those of Howard County in that year.

The Missouri Conference was organized in 1816. The following year Buffalo circuit was organized out of the northern part of the Missouri circuit, and Cape Girardeau divided. The new circuit was called St. Francois.

Lamoine, stretching from Jefferson City to Lexington to the Grand River, was set off from Booneslick in 1818.

1820 saw the Gasconade circuit, along the river of the same name, taken from Coldwater, and a western boundary thus set to that old circuit. In 1821, the year Missouri became a state, St. Louis was invaded by the church, and St. Louis circuit formally organized. There were 2223 members (1976 white and 247 black) in the entire conference that year.

In 1822, Fishing River was formed out of Booneslick. This new circuit was essentially what is now Ray County and the area to the north and west.

After a four-year hiatus, Lexington circuit, which included all of southwest Missouri, from where Marshall now stands,was organized.

So, twenty years after the first formal circuit, and 28 years after John Clark preached the first Methodist sermon in Missouri, there were fifteen circuits in the state, covering, at least on paper, nearly the entire state. Membership was somewhere around 3,000, or approximately 1 Methodist for every 40 people in Missouri.

The pioneering work was done. What remained was for new churches, new circuits, to be carved out of the growth of population in these founding circuits. With the flood of

settlers to the west, Methodism was poised for a new work of evangelism, and a period of unprecedented growth.

NOTES

(1) Frank C. Tucker, THE METHODIST CHURCH IN MISSOURI, 1789- Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1966, p. 15-16

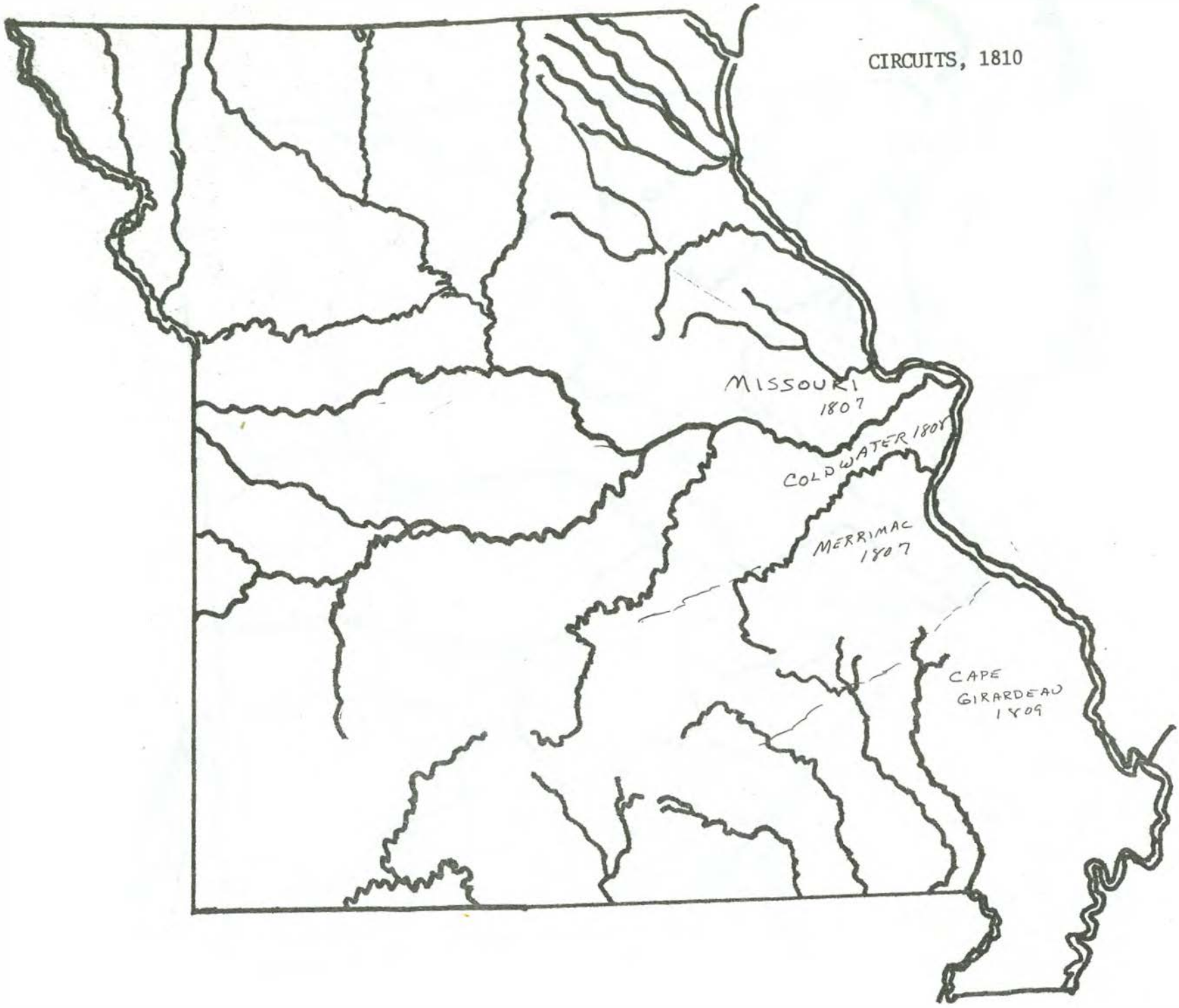
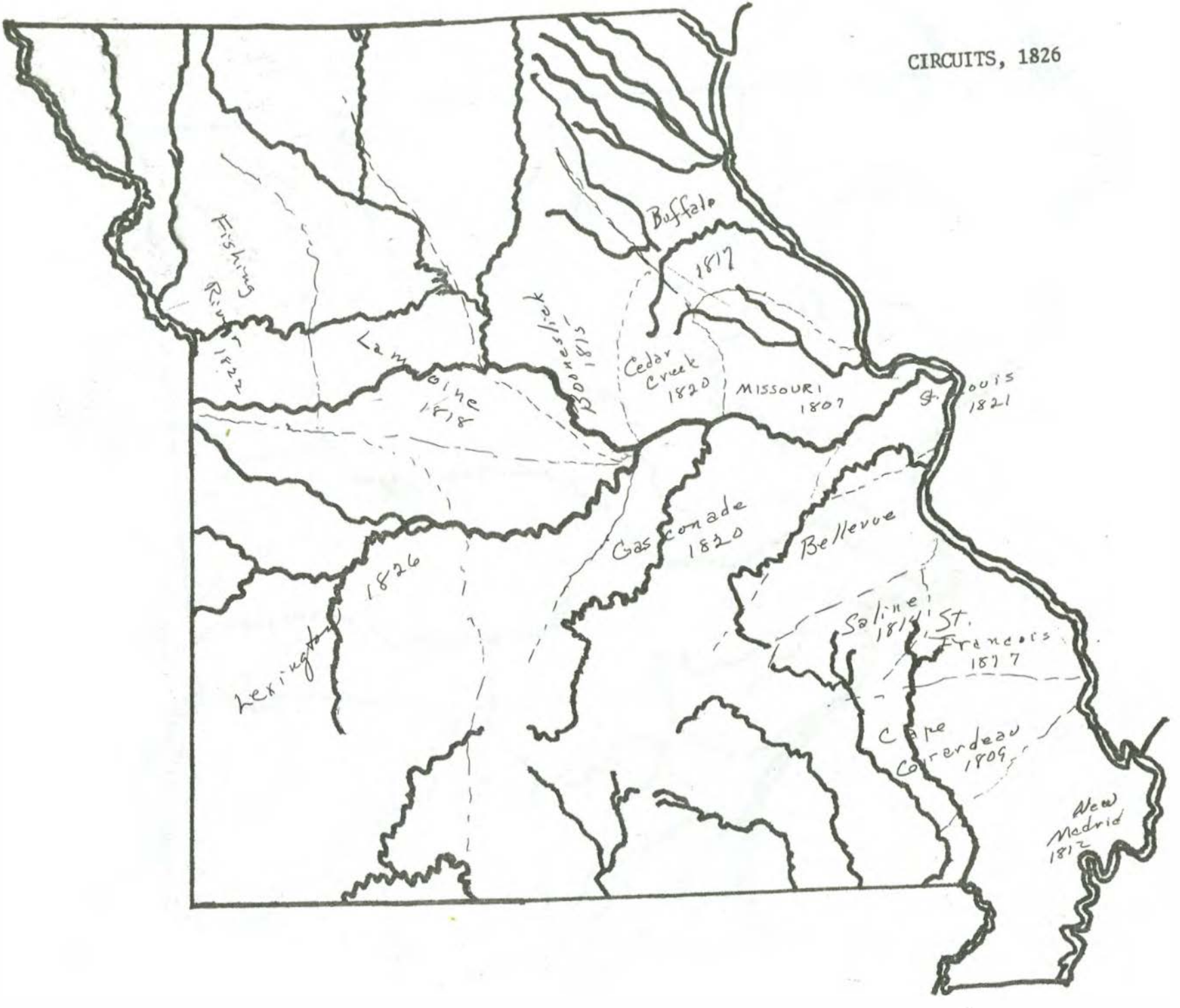
(2) WESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, March 6, 1840, quoted in Tucker, p. 19

(3) Tucker, p. 19

(4) The data on the formation of circuits is taken from W.S. Woodard, ANNALS OF METHODISM IN MISSOURI, Columbia: E.W. Stephens, 1893. Woodard is a priceless collection of source material for anyone doing serious work in Missouri Methodism.

(5) Tucker, p. 31

CIRCUITS, 1810



CIRCUITS, 1826